

Remarks for WMATA Board meeting
October 25, 2007

My name is Bruce Williams, and I have served 14 years on the Takoma Park City Council. I have served for more than a decade on the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Board of Directors and I chaired that body in 2002. I also serve on and have chaired, the National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council.

I know what regional cooperation looks like, and this board, and your staff, clearly have problems grappling with, and attaining, fair, rational, and professional results in a number of areas.

Our City Council has maintained a consistent position on the proposed development at the Takoma Metro since 1999. We have always said: we are not opposed to development at that site, and we've always recognized the authority of the District to regulate land use on any of the land that isn't needed for transit facilities. **But**, we also know that a majority of the transit users at this station are Maryland residents. Our mission has always been to protect our residents' access to transit, now and in the future.

We've provided lengthy, comprehensive and articulate comments throughout your process, but it's quite clear that you, the WMATA Board, have neither received nor heard our message. We've tried to be constructive about the design of the transit facilities, to the point that we've paid for the kind of transit analysis that WMATA should have done before the property was ever listed as a joint development site. We've enlisted the support of our federal, state and county elected officials to supply their thoughtful comments in support of our position. We're frustrated and angry. Your process is broken, and the plans that you want to approve today are the result of that broken process.

If you doubt what I and so many others are trying to tell you, let's see what happens if patrons in Takoma try to access the current station by driving into the existing traffic circle with the busses—watch the chaos that ensues. Watch as handicapped patrons get dropped off in the circle. Get ready for an avalanche of complaints. The plan you want to approve today will yield just such an outcome.

Your plan will establish a transit facility that'll be laughed at by generations of planners who will shake their heads at the boneheaded result. You're about to sell off too much land to make designing safe and accessible transit at this station possible for us, our children and our grandchildren. You have a number of alternatives that could work. Vote no on the EYA plan.